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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Note by the Chairman

1. Subsidiary bodies

1. Having regard to the expected workload of the Special Committee for the current session and in order to consider the question of decolonization with an innovative approach and to ensure transparency of work, it is suggested that the meetings of the Bureau of the Special Committee be open-ended.

2. With regard to the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance, it may be recalled that in 1996 the Special Committee considered the question of integration of the Subcommittee with the Special Committee on the basis of the recommendation contained in the 103rd report of the Working Group (A/AC.109/L.1852). The relevant paragraph of that report reads as follows:

> "15. The Working Group may recall that the proposal for integration, which was made by the delegation of Papua New Guinea, was discussed by the Open-ended Working Group of the Special Committee on 29 March 1996. It was felt that, for further consideration, the delegation of Papua New Guinea should prepare a written proposal comparing the mandates and functions of the Special Committee and of its subsidiary body. The delegation of Papua New Guinea submitted the written proposal on the question of integration. The Working Group addressed the issue and decided to recommend to the Special Committee that it defer any action in this regard until further examination of the proposal during the next session of the Special Committee, in 1997."

3. At its 1464th meeting, the Special Committee approved the recommendation.

4. The Acting Chairman suggests that the Special Committee take up, early in the session, the question of integration of the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance with the Special Committee. The general thrust of this proposal will help streamline the work of the Committee, avoid duplication and enhance its efficiency.

2. Allocation of items and procedure for consideration

5. Annexed to the present note is a list of pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during the year, together with an indication of the procedure that the Committee may wish to adopt.

6. The Special Committee should take into account the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session that are relevant to the work of the Committee, as listed in the note by the Secretary-General (A/AC.109/L.1855). It is also understood that they should continue to be guided by the relevant provisions of the resolution adopted by the Assembly on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration (resolution 45/33 of 20 November 1990), as well as the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991 on the basis of proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General on the Decade (A/46/634/Rev.1).

7. As the Committee is aware, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) decided to defer consideration of the matter relating to the questions of small Territories until March 1997, which was confirmed by the General Assembly at its 83rd plenary meeting, on 13 December 1996. Pending the outcome of the consultations between the Special Committee and some administering Powers with good offices of the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, the Special Committee should take into account the developments related to those consultations in its work during the current session.

8. The Acting Chairman draws the attention of the Committee to the annex to the present note, which contains no indication as to the allocation of the items, which will be taken at the Committee's plenary and/or in the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance, pending a decision of the Special Committee on whether to integrate the Subcommittee with the Special Committee.

3. Order of priority for consideration of items

9. The Chairman will hold consultations with regard to the order of priority to be given for consideration of items in plenary meetings.

10. It is also his intention to hold consultations on specific activities envisaged under the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

11. In the meantime, subject to the availability of the working papers prepared by the Secretariat, it is suggested that the Special Committee conduct its substantive work in accordance with the schedule of meetings approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session (A/51/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 52).

4. Recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly

12. In accordance with paragraph 31 of General Assembly decision 34/401 of 29 November 1979, and in the light of past experience, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the procedure adopted at its 1982 session[1] in connection with the formulation of its recommendations to the Assembly at its fifty-second session.

5. Utilization of conference-servicing resources

13. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly decided to waive rules 67 and 108 of its rules of procedure in order to permit meetings to be declared open and debates to proceed without the presence of the quorum required under those rules. The Assembly also decided that morning meetings should begin at 10 a.m.

14. As those measures have further enhanced the effective utilization of conference-servicing resources, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the same procedure. It should be understood that, in accordance with the rules cited, the presence of a majority of members would continue to be required for any decisions to be taken.

Notes

[1] See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/37/23/Rev.1), chap. I, paras. 60-69.

Annex

PENDING MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE DURING 1997

Question	Procedure for consideration
East Timor	As a separate item
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	"
Gibraltar	"
New Caledonia	"
Western Sahara	"
Special Committee decision of 15 August 1991 concerning Puerto Rico (A/51/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 41)	As appropriate
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations and related questions (General Assembly resolution 51/139)	As a separate item
Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination (General Assembly resolution 51/140)	"
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration (General Assembly decision 51/426[a])	"
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 51/141)	"

[a] Tentative number.

Question	Procedure for consideration
American Samoa	As a separate item
Anguilla	"
Bermuda	"
British Virgin Islands	"
Cayman Islands	"
Guam	"
Montserrat	"
Pitcairn	"
St. Helena	"
Tokelau	"
Turks and Caicos Islands	"
United States Virgin Islands	"
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (General Assembly resolution 46/181 and report of the Secretary-General (A/46/634/Rev.1, annex))	As appropriate
Question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters	"
Question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable	"
Pattern of conferences (General Assembly resolution 51/211)	"
Question of sending visiting missions to Territories (para. 12 of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	"
Dissemination of information on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 51/147)	"
Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories	"

Question	Procedure for consideration
Matters relating to the small Territories (para. 11 (c) of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	To be taken into consideration in the examination of specific Territories
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (art. 15 of the Convention)	"
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 51/142)	"
Compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other relevant resolutions on decolonization (para. 11 (b) of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	"